

**Missoula – Mineral
FSA County Office
3550 Mullan Rd, #106
Missoula, MT 59808**

County Committee Members

Paul Hanson – Chairman
Ray Rugg – Vice Chair
Bob Schroeder – Member
Denley Loge – Member
Jody Wills - Member

FSA Office Personnel

Collette Rulison – Acting CED
Shay Hanson – Office Clerk

Dates to Remember:

February 19 – Holiday Office closed

March 15 – NAP sales closing date for all crops except value loss and honey

March 15 – Crop insurance sales closing date for 2007 spring-seeded crops

March 31 – Final loan/LDP availability date for various crops harvested in 2006

April 2 – Deadline for payment limitation changes

June 1 – Signature Deadline on 2007 DCP Contracts

Notice of Loss – 15 calendar days following disaster

July 15 – Acreage reporting deadline

Aug 1 – Deadline for reconstitutions

September 25-27 – Tribal Outreach Forum, Bozeman

October 2-3 – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium, Dillon



FSA Plans to Reorganize

In the next few weeks, FSA in Montana will submit a final plan to the national FSA headquarters in Washington D.C. for their review and acceptance for shifting the way FSA does business across Montana. The plan includes:

- The closure of seven FSA offices across Montana including Lewis and Clark, Meagher, Park, Ravalli, Sanders, Sweet Grass, and Treasure. These offices will be consolidated with neighboring counties. Producers served by an office which is closed will have the choice to do business with any office in a contiguous county.
- Re-distribution of staff to be placed in offices where workload is the highest. The consolidation of offices would increase staffing levels of employees statewide.
- Employee retention. No FSA employee will be forced out of employment due to a consolidation action. In the seven offices targeted for closure, there are ten employees affected. All employees will be offered employment in the receiving office of the closure.
- Increased utilization of technology capabilities. To reduce producer visits to FSA offices: 1) toll-free phone numbers will be utilized; 2) increased opportunities for clients to do business remotely through mail, fax, e-mail or web-based applications; and 3) providing a periodic presence in strategic locations in closed counties such as informational meetings, application sign-up meetings, and FSA office days.
- A commitment to providing increased producer education of programs administered by FSA and what is needed to receive benefits from those programs. Increased education will reduce the amount of time clients spend applying for program benefits at their local FSA office.

After review and concurrence by the FSA national headquarters, the Appropriations and Agricultural Committees of both the US House of Representatives and the US Senate will be notified of the plan. Concurrently with that notification process, public meetings will be held in those communities affected by the office closures. A final decision will then be made on the plan and implementation will begin.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of Noninsurable crops when low yields occur as a result of natural disaster. Eligible crops are those commercially produced for food, livestock consumption, and some specialty crops. Eligible producers must pay an administrative service fee of \$100 per crop per administrative county or \$300 per producer per county, not to exceed \$900 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Service fees may be waived for limited-resource producers. **Payment of a service fee does not guarantee coverage.** There are many eligibility requirements that must be met. ***The Application Closing Date for all crops except value loss and honey is March 15, 2007.*** Contact the office for further information.

Common Payment Limitations

A limitation on the total annual payments that a "person" may receive from federal agricultural programs has been in effect since the Agricultural Act of 1970. Depending on your financial arrangements regarding borrowed capital, it may affect payment limitation determinations and result in ineligibility. Contact the county office for further explanation.

Each program has an established payment limitation that applies to all farming operations. Details for each program's payment limitation may be obtained at the county office.

Gross Revenue:

Many disaster programs state that a "person", as determined by payment limitation definition, shall not be eligible to receive certain payments and benefits if their gross revenue exceeds \$2 million or \$2.5 million.

Direct and Counter Cyclical Farm Specific Crop and Share Information:

To participate in DCP, producers are required to designate shares and sign the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program Contract (CCC-509) on a yearly basis. The annual DCP sign-up period runs from October 1 to June 1 of the applicable program year. CCC-509 must be submitted by June 1 of the applicable program year. CCC-509's with signatures obtained after June 1, but before September 30, will be accepted, but the farm will be assessed a late-filed sign-up fee of \$100. All supporting documentation, such as CCC-502, AD-1026, and CCC-526, must be submitted before payments can be issued. Annual acreage reports indicating uses of all cropland on a farm must be filed by the applicable established reporting dates. Acreage reports filed after the applicable final reporting date may be accepted if all requirements are met and a late-filed fee is paid.

Loan and LDP Programs: USDA is required to annually publicize provisions of Loan and LDP Programs before the beginning of each crop year and making loans and LDP's for the current crop year. Loans and LDP's are available from the time of harvest until the loan availability date ends. Final loan availability date differs by crop.

Farm Loans: FSA offers direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loan programs to farmers and ranchers who are temporarily unable to obtain private commercial credit. Rural youth loans, Beginning Farmer and Rancher, and assistance for socially disadvantaged persons are also available.

Change in Farming Operation or Address:

Producers are reminded to notify this office to report change in address or ownership. This is vital to assist this office in keeping records.

Change in Direct Deposit Account:

The Debt Collection Act of 1996 mandates that payments from FSA be directly deposited into a producer's checking or savings bank account. It is important that any change in the producer's account such as type of account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

Spousal Signature:

A husband and wife may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) programs in which either has an individual interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office from either spouse. Exceptions include claim settlements, power of attorney forms and signatory authority for an entity.

Submission of Applications via E-Government:

As required by the Freedom to E-File Act, eForms provides customers with the option to electronically access, fill out, and print paper forms, or obtain secure electronic access credentials for signing and transmitting forms and other documents electronically to their local Service Center. A secure website is offered. Logon to: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov> to register for a Customer ID and password.

**1099-G Mailed from Kansas City**

During the last week of January, producers who have received payments from FSA should have also received a CCC-1099-G from the Kansas City office. A CCC-1099-G is a report to the Internal Revenue Service about FSA payments made to you in calendar year 2006. The CCC-1099-G is a service to help participating producers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace the program participant's responsibility to report income to the IRS.

If you received a CCC-1099-G, we recommend that you check the amounts shown with those in your records to see that the amounts are correct. Refunds will no longer be reported on the 1099-G, but will be available online from the FSA Financial Inquiries (FSA-FI) web-based database. Program participants with eAuthentication user ID's and passwords can access their refund information at FSA-FI and select "Inquiry Type 1099/Refund Reports". Refund amounts are displayed on the Producer's Year-to-Date Activity web page.

If you have a question concerning the 1099-G refund information, you may contact the county office for assistance locating the correct payment data. If you choose to visit the office, bring your CCC-1099-G with you.

**Mark your Calendars**

Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Symposium

October 2 & 3, 2007
Dillon, MT

Missoula – Mineral Co. FSA

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Postage Block

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Nondiscrimination Statement:

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."